

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An internal variable embedded in an instrument that governs the operation of an instrument comprising:

means for storing a value;

means for changing said value; and

means for attaching to another item that need to be notified of a change of said value.

2. The variable of claim 1 wherein said value is an allowed range of values.

3. The variable of claim 1 wherein said value is a requested value.

4. The variable of claim 1 wherein said value is an adapted value.

5. The variable of claim 1 and further comprising a means for storing attributes.

6. The variable of claim 4 wherein said adapted value is constrained to stay within the allowed range that corresponds to physical limits.

7. The variable of claim 4 wherein said adapted value corresponds to optimal use.

8. The variable of claim 3 wherein said requested value corresponds to corresponding to capabilities.
9. The variable of claim 1 wherein said value may change dynamically.
10. The variable of claim 9 wherein said value may depend on the state of other internal variables.
11. A method for governing the operation of an instrument comprising the steps of:  
storing a value in an internal variable embedded in the instrument;  
changing the value; and  
notifying another item of a change of the value of the internal variable.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the value is an allowed range of values.
13. The method of claim 11 wherein the value is a requested value.
14. The method of claim 11 wherein the value is an adapted value.
15. The method of claim 11 and further comprising the step of storing attributes in the internal variable.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein the adapted value is constrained to stay within the allowed range that corresponds to physical limits.
17. The method of claim 14 wherein the adapted value corresponds to optimal use.
18. The method of claim 13 wherein the requested value corresponds to corresponding to capabilities.
19. The method of claim 11 wherein the value may change dynamically.
20. The method of claim 19 wherein the value may depend on the state of other internal variables.